

Georgia Dept. of Agriculture (GDA)

Tommy Irvin, Commissioner

GDA enforces the Georgia Food Act, Laws, Rules and Regulations and works with FDA, FSIS and other federal agencies to implement food safety standards for foods produced within the state. GDA inspects retail and wholesale grocery stores and other retail food establishments, seafood facilities, as well as dairy farms and milk processing plants, grain mills, food manufacturing plants, bottled water plants and food storage warehouses. The department can stop the sale of unsafe food products made, stored or distributed in the state.

Consumers with questions or complaints may call the GDA Consumer Protection

Division at 404-656-3627

or 1-800-282-5852, ext. 3627.

Visit the website at

<http://www.agr.state.ga.us>

Georgia Dept. of Education (DOE)

DOE has oversight responsibility for the National School Lunch, Breakfast, After-School Snack, Summer School Foodservice, and Commodity Foods Program for the State of Georgia. Participants include public schools, DOE approved private schools, public residential childcare institutions, and USDA approved private residential childcare institutions. ***If your child becomes ill with gastrointestinal symptoms, notify the school or institution.*** Schools keep track of absenteeism and ***your calls may help identify a foodborne outbreak.*** The school will contact the local health department who can investigate.

The Department of Education School and Community Nutrition Office can be reached directly at 404-656-2469.

Food safety information is available on the DOE website

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/nutrition/links.html#topics>

Georgia Dept. of Human Resources, Division of Public Health (GDPH)

Epidemiologists in the Division of Public Health (GDPH), Notifiable Disease Epidemiology Section, conduct surveillance activities and assist local health departments in the investigation of foodborne illness and outbreaks. ***It is important for the general public/consumers to report suspected foodborne illness to their local health department.*** Often calls from concerned citizens are how outbreaks are first detected. Whenever you suspect food as the cause of illness, call the Environmental Health office in your local health department. The health department will begin an investigation and notify all the appropriate authorities.

If a public health official contacts you to find out more about an illness you may have suffered, your cooperation is important. In public health investigations, it can be as important to talk to healthy people as to ill people. Your cooperation may be needed even if you are not ill. ***The GDPH Epidemiology Section can be reached at 404-657-2588.***

State and local environmental health specialists inspect institutional food service facilities (i.e. schools, nursing homes, and hospital cafeterias) and restaurants. Facilities that serve food to patrons (this includes fast-food establishments, restaurants and delis) are inspected by local health departments to make sure they are clean and have adequate kitchen facilities. Find out how restaurants performed or scored on their most recent inspections, and use that score to help guide your choice of which restaurants to patronize. ***If you are concerned about unsanitary practices or unsafe food handling practices within a food service facility you can contact the county health department's Environmental Health office, or the state's Environmental Health office at 404-657-6534.***

Visit the GDPH website at
<http://www.ph.dhr.state.ga.us>

EASY REFERENCE PUBLICATION FOR CONSUMERS



Food Safety

Role of the Various Agencies



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Compiled by

The Georgia Public Health Team

• Food Safety Task Force •

FOOD SAFETY

Role of the various Agencies

Many different groups in public health, industry, regulatory agencies, and academia have roles in making the food supply safe. Continual monitoring is provided by food inspectors, microbiologists, epidemiologists, and other food scientists working for city and county health departments, state public health agencies, and various federal departments and agencies.

Food safety is a massive joint effort by many governmental agencies and every consumer.

Consumers should . . .

- (1)** report problems such as suspected illness from food consumption, availability of outdated foods for purchase, unsanitary store or restaurant conditions, etc.,
- (2)** feel comfortable reporting such problems,
- (3)** know the appropriate government regulatory agencies to contact,
- (4)** have this information conveniently located, and
- (5)** try to educate themselves and become knowledgeable on safe food practices in the home. This brochure provides the consumer with information on the appropriate government agencies to notify in the event of a food problem or concern.

Note: Any agency will help determine the correct agency with jurisdictional responsibility.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

FDA enforces food safety laws governing domestic and imported food, except meat, poultry and processed egg products. FDA oversees the safety of bottled water, soft drinks and dietary supplements. FDA inspects food production establishments and food warehouses and works cooperatively with states to oversee dairies, shellfish processors, and retail food establishments, such as restaurants and grocery stores. FDA has legal jurisdiction over products shipped in interstate commerce.

Consumers can contact FDA by telephone:

1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332)

or

FDA Outreach and Information Center

1-888-SAFE-FOOD (1-888-723-3366)

***Within the State of Georgia,
consumers can call***

(404) 253-1174

FDA's Atlanta District's Public Affairs Office

Report Consumer Complaints to

(404) 253-1169

Visit the FDA website at

<http://www.fda.gov>



USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

FSIS regulates and enforces the safety of domestic and imported meat and poultry, which include soups, stews, pizzas and frozen foods which contain meat or poultry.

Consumers can lodge complaints associated with consumption of meat, poultry or egg products that may have caused illness, injury, or allergic reactions. Consumers also can report to FSIS any meat or poultry products that appear underprocessed, misbranded, economically adulterated or that may contain foreign objects.

Call the FSIS Atlanta District office at **404-562-5900** and ask to speak to a compliance officer.

Remember to keep the original product packaging so that a FSIS investigation can be conducted. Meat and poultry products have a USDA seal and number that identifies the plant where the product was manufactured. Many products also have a code indicating when the item was produced. This information can be vital in tracing a problem to its source.

Consumers can call the toll-free

Meat and Poultry Hotline

(1-800-535-4555)

or

visit the FSIS website at

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov>

to obtain food safety information.